

Sotheby's, New York, 11 January 1986, lot 109 (as "from the Collection of an East Coast Museum"). Broulhiet 1938, 35; HdG 1907–1927, 4: 403, no. 93; oil on panel, 52 x 66, National Trust, Petworth House, England. All of these paintings are illustrated by Broulhiet.

13. See Broulhiet 1938, 34.

14. Smith 1829–1942, 9: 727, no. 25. Although it seems probable that Smith's comments relate to the two Hobbema paintings, it should be noted that provenance information he provides about these paintings is inaccurate.

15. A smaller version of the Melbourne painting (Broulhiet 1938, 224) is in Schloss Rohoncz, Lugano.

16. Barent Gael (Haarlem before 1635–after 1681 Amsterdam) was a pupil of Philips Wouwerman and sometimes painted staffage figures for Jan Wynants as well. (Bernt 1948/1960, 1: 295.) Although no documentary evidence exists that Gael worked with Hobbema, a collaboration between the two painters would have been possible. The figures in Gael's *Travelers at a Village Well* (sold Christie's, London, 20 February 1986, lot 237) are quite similar to those in *The Travelers*. Gael also painted horses in motion in comparable ways: see *Peasants Merry-making Outside an Inn* (sold Christie's, London, 25 October 1974, lot 136) and *Horsemen Halting Outside an Inn* (National Trust, Dyrham Park, near Chippenham).

References

- 1829–1842 Smith, 9 (1842): 727, no. 25.
 1834 Nieuwenhuys: 147–149.
 1839 Koppius: 114–128, repro. (as dated 1662).
 1839 Hérís: 54: 5–7, repro.
 1854 Jervis: 2: 225.
 1859 Thoré (Bürger): 28–44.
 1861–1876 Blanc: 12 pages.
 1864 Scheltema: 214–226.
 1891 Cundall: 157.
 1885–1900 Widener, 2: no. 212, repro.
 1907–1927 HdG, 4 (1912): 385–386, no. 94, 387–388, no. 100.
 1913–1916 Widener: introduction, 78 repro.
 1923 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
 1927 Rosenberg: 139–151.
 1931 Widener: 78–79, repro.
 1937 Roos: 183, repro.
 1938 Broulhiet: 71, 381, no. 32, repro. (as after Ruisdael, dated 1664).
 1948 Widener: 59, repro.
 1959 Stechow: 3–18.
 1965 NGA: 68, no. 627.
 1968 NGA: 60, repro.
 1975 NGA: 176–177, repro.
 1981 Schmidt: 156, 198, note 192.
 1985 NGA: 203, repro.
 1987 Sutton: 350.

1937.1.61 (61)

A Wooded Landscape

1663

Oil on canvas, 94.7 x 130.5 (37 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 51 $\frac{3}{8}$)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Inscriptions

At lower right: *meijndert hobbema*

F 1663

Technical Notes: The support is a medium-weight, tightly and plain-woven fabric which has been double lined. The original dimensions are slightly enlarged on all sides. A small L-shaped tear occurs in the clouds to the right of center.

Paint is applied over a thick, warm dark gray ground layer in thin pastes with vigorous brushwork. Low impasto is found in foliage and figure highlights. The x-radiograph shows a change in the lower left corner, where the artist painted out a small tree trunk. Small losses are confined to the tear and edges, and abrasion is minimal. Discolored varnish was removed when the painting was cleaned in 1987.

Provenance: Possibly Charles Cobbe, archbishop of Dublin [1687–1765]; by inheritance to his grandson, Charles Cobbe [1782–1857], Newbridge House, Donabate, near Dublin.¹ (T. B. Brown, London, in 1839); Robert Stayner Holford, M. P. [1808–1892], Dorchester House, London, and Westonbirt, Gloucestershire; by inheritance to his son, Lieut.-Col. Sir George Lindsay Holford, K.C.V.O. [1860–1926].² J. Pierpont Morgan [1837–1913], New York, in 1901; by inheritance to J. P. Morgan, Jr. [1867–1943] in 1935; (consigned to M. Knoedler & Co., New York); sold 20 December 1935 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.³

Exhibited: British Institution, London, 1840, no. 22, and 1851, no. 49. *Art Treasures of the United Kingdom*, Museum of Ornamental Art, Manchester, 1857, no. 767. British Institution, London, 1862, no. 3. *Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, Winter Exhibition*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1887, no. 59. *Exhibition of Pictures by Dutch Masters of the Seventeenth Century*, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1900, no. 24. New York 1909, no. 48, repro. *Loan Exhibition of the J. Pierpont Morgan Collection*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1914.

IN THIS IDYLIC VIEW of the world, the season is summer, the foliage of the trees is dense and lush, sunlight breaks through the billowing clouds in soft pools of light to give warmth to the day, and men and women wander along paths, stopping to converse, or sit idly by a pool of water to fish. Hobbema's view of *A Wooded Landscape*, one of his most harmonious compositions, has been highly praised since Smith first published it in 1835, when it was in the collection of Charles Cobbe.⁴ Waagen, for example, wrote in 1854: "Seldom has the power of art in expressing the effect of the low afternoon sun in the light clouds in



Fig. 1. Attributed to Meindert Hobbema, *A Wooded Glade*, chalk, ink, and wash, New York, Collection of Emile Wolf



Fig. 2. Meindert Hobbema, *A Wooded Landscape*, c. 1663, oil on canvas, London, Trustees of the Wallace Collection



Fig. 3. Meindert Hobbema, *Landscape with Cows and Travellers*, 1663, oil on canvas, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland

the sky, on tree, bush, and meadow, been exhibited with such astonishing power, transparency and freshness as in this picture."⁵

Signed and dated 1663, this painting is among the first of Hobbema's fully mature works. Here he has freed himself from the overt dependence on Jacob van Ruisdael (q.v.) evident in his compositions from the previous years, for example, *The Travelers* (1942.9.31). The landscape is now open and spacious, the painterly touch more delicate and varied, and the palette considerably lighter than in paintings from 1662. Hobbema draws the viewer back into the forest with pools of light that accent distant foliage and silhouette tree trunks rising before them, a device he more fully exploits in his later paintings, for example, *Hut among Trees* (1942.9.30). He uses this technique effectively to enhance the recession into space of the small trees growing along the side of the dike in the right middle ground. Stechow has noted that the configuration of these trees, which he terms "tin-soldier trees," relates back to Hobbema's earliest compositions (for example, *A River Scene*, 1658, Detroit Institute of Arts).⁶ One might thus argue that Hobbema was here sufficiently free of Ruisdael's influence to reach back and draw upon motifs that were part of his repertoire before becoming Ruisdael's student. The location of Hobbema's scene is not known, although the close similarities to a drawing of this wooded glade attributed to Hobbema, in the Emile Wolf Collection, New York (fig. 1) suggest that it is based upon an actual site. Hobbema also painted a second slightly simplified version of the scene, now in the Wallace Collection (fig. 2).

When Smith published the painting in 1835, he indicated that it was a companion piece to the masterful landscape of the same dimensions and date now in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin (fig. 3). Both paintings have a distinctive signature in which Hobbema wrote out in full his complete name. At that time the Washington painting was in the collection of Charles Cobbe in Ireland and the Beit painting was owned by an English politician, the Rt. Hon. Edward John Littleton (1791–1863), who was created 1st Baron Hatherton in 1835. No earlier provenance, however, exists to confirm that the paintings were ever together.⁷ Both paintings can stand by themselves as independent creations and compositional parallels are not particularly strong. In the Dublin painting, moreover, the cows appear to be painted by Adriaen van de Velde while no such collaboration with a staffage painter is evident in the Washington work. Smith's statement must therefore be treated with some scepticism. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that we know so



Meindert Hobbema, *A Wooded Landscape*, 1937.1.61

little of the types and character of seventeenth-century landscape pendants that his assertion cannot be totally discounted.⁸

Notes

1. Information found in the draft catalogue of Knoedler paintings in the Mellon Collection at the National Gallery of Art, written c. 1940 by G. H. McCall for Duveen Brothers. Other sources also state that the picture was owned by the younger Cobbe and that it was owned during the eighteenth century by one of his ancestors, but there is no other specific mention of Charles Cobbe, archbishop of Dublin.

2. *Holford Collection* 1927, 2: ix, produced by the executors of Sir G. L. Holford's estate, says that the Hobbema that had belonged to "Mr." (i.e. R. S.) Holford was sold to help pay his death duties. Holford also owned another painting that came to the National Gallery of Art by way of The Andrew W. Mellon Collection, Anthony van Dyck's portrait of *Marchesa Balbi* (1937.1.49).

3. The painting (Knoedler no. CA 787) was taken in on consignment in February 1935 and sold to the Mellon Trust in December of that year. (Letter from Nancy C. Little, librarian, M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 12 September 1987, in NGA curatorial files.)

4. Smith's 1835 entry for the painting consisted of only a brief description, but in his 1842 supplement he described the work in great detail, and praised it lavishly, saying: "This brilliant epitome of Nature is justly entitled to the highest commendations, and is in truth an example of...rare occurrence...." (Smith 1829-1842, 9: 725). The painting was also clearly greatly appreciated by its owners, to judge by a fascinating account of the circumstances of its sale by Charles Cobbe in 1839, published by his daughter Frances Power Cobbe in 1894. She wrote as follows:

Though often hard pressed to carry out with a very moderate income all his projects of improvements, he was never in debt. One by one he rebuilt or re-roofed almost every cottage on his estate, making what had been little better than pig-styes, fit for human habitation; and when he found that his annual rents could never suffice to do all that was required in this way for his tenants in his mountain property, he induced my eldest brother, then just of age, to join with him in selling two of the pictures which were the heirlooms of the family and the pride of the house, a Gaspar Poussin and a Hobbema, which last now adorns the walls of Dorchester House. I remember as a child seeing the tears in his eyes as this beautiful painting was taken out of the room in which it had been like a perpetual ray of sunshine. But the sacrifice was completed, and eighty good stone and slate "Hobbema Cottages," as we called them, soon rose all over Glenasmole. Be it noted by those who deny every merit in an Anglo-Irish landlord, that not a farthing was added to the rent of the tenants who profited by this real act of self-denial. (Cobbe 1894, 1: 23-24.)

5. Waagen 1854-1857, 2: 203.

6. Stechow 1959, 9, 15.

7. Gregory Rubinstein has pointed out verbally that it is nonetheless possible that both paintings could have been together in Ireland in the early 1830s. Littleton was appointed chief secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland in 1833, and must therefore have spent a considerable amount of time there during this period.

8. A case in point is *The Travelers* and *The Old Oak* (discussed in the entry on *The Travelers*, 1942.9.31), which are apparently companion pieces, but whose commonality, other than dimensions and date, is essentially that the compositions were both derived from Jacob van Ruisdael.

References

- 1829-1842 Smith, 6 (1835): 149, no. 100; 9 (1842): 724-725, no. 18.
 1854-1857 Waagen, 2: 202-203.
 1854 Jervis, 2: 225, 344.
 1857 Thoré (Bürger): 291.
 1859 Thoré (Bürger): 28-44.
 1860 Waagen, 2: 444.
 1861 Blanc, 2: 12.
 1864 Scheltema: 214-226.
 1865 Thoré (Bürger): 291.
 1890b Michel: 18, 50, 52.
 1891 Cundall: 56-58, 157.
 1894 Cobbe, 1: 23-24.
 1901 "Sale room": 190-197.
 1907 Roberts: unpaginated, repro.
 1907-1927 HdG, 4 (1912): 412-413, no. 171.
 1913 Burroughs: 2-13, repro.
 1913 Bode, 3: 21.
 1927 *Holford Collection*, 2: ix.
 1938 Brouhiet: 68, 275, 424, no. 347, 373, pl. 581, repro. of signature.
 1941 NGA: 97, no. 61.
 1942 NGA: 26, repro.
 1949 Mellon: 98, repro.
 1959 Stechow: 3-18, fig. 13.
 1960 MacLaren: 170.
 1965 NGA: 67, no. 61.
 1966 Stechow: 77, fig. 151.
 1966 Cairns and Walker, 1: 248, repro.
 1968 NGA: 59, repro.
 1975 NGA: 174-175, repro.
 1976 Walker: 295, no. 397, color repro.
 1985 NGA: 202, repro.
 1986 Sutton: 305-306.
 1987 Sutton: 349, note 2.

1942.9.30 (626)

Hut among Trees

c. 1664

Oil on canvas, 96.5 x 108 (38 x 42½)

Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left: *M Hobbema*

Technical Notes: The support, a medium-weight, plain-weave fabric, has been double lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Diagonal trowel marks from the application of the white ground are visible in the x-radiograph.

Paint is applied fluidly with vigorous brushmarking and refined with transparent glazes.¹ After an initial freely painted sketch, more detailed layers were applied. Infrared reflec-